www.thekabultimes.com twitter.com/thekabultimes info@thekabultimes.com facebook.com/thekabultimes

THE KABUL TIMES

Founded in 1962 Saratan 25-1405 Thursday 16 July 2026 INo: 96 -Vol: LXIV

DAILY

Kabul 34° Sunny | Kandahar 42° Sunny | Herat 39° Sunny | Jalalabad 41° Sunny | Mazar-e-Sharif 44° Sunny | Bamyan 26° Sunny

Deputy PM Pays Tribute to Former Qatari Emir at Embassy in Kabul

KABUL: Mawlavi Abdul Salam Hanafi, Deputy Prime Minister for Administrative Affairs, visited the Embassy of Qatar in Kabul to offer condolences following the passing of former Qatari Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani and signed the embassy's book of condolences.

Hanafi described the late Sheikh Hamad as one of the most influential leaders in Qatar's modern history, saying he played a significant and lasting role in serving his country, its people, and the Islamic world, according to a statement from Arg on Wednesday.

He also praised the former emir's support for just causes, particularly his long-standing backing of the Afghan people, and conveyed the Islamic Emirate's condolences and sympathy to the government and people of Qatar. **The Kabul Times**

Muttaqi Visits Qatar for Former Emir Demise

KABUL: Mawlavi Amir Khan Muttaqi, Foreign Minister of the Islamic Emirate, traveled to Doha on Wednesday to convey the condolences of the leadership of the Islamic Emirate following the passing of former Qatari Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani.

Muttaqi expressed sympathy to Qatar's Emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, on behalf of the Islamic Emirate, according to a statement from the ministry.

During the visit, the Afghan foreign minister also met with Qatari Prime Minister and Foreign Minister Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense Sheikh Saud bin Abdulrahman bin Hassan Al Thani, and Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr. Mohammed bin Abdulaziz Al Khulaifi, and discussed bilateral relations and issues of mutual interest. **The Kabul Times**

Collective Efforts Key to Afghanistan's Reconstruction, Azizi Says

KABUL: The country's Minister of Industry and Commerce Nooruddin Azizi has emphasized that Afghanistan's reconstruction requires sustained collective efforts, saying that coordinated cooperation among government institutions, development organizations, and the private sector is essential to accelerating economic recovery and national development.

Azizi made the remarks while chairing a coordination meeting between the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, national and international sectoral organizations, and provincial officials, the ministry said in a statement on Wednesday.

The meeting focused on improving the implementation of projects aimed at promoting entrepreneurship, creating employment opportunities, supporting returnees, and expanding financial, technical, and vocational assistance, the statement said.

He said that every development initiative, regardless of its size, contributes to the country's long-term reconstruction, noting that small projects, when combined, can generate significant progress in rebuilding Afghanistan and strengthening its economy.

Zabul Governor Mullah Mohammad Sharif, who attended the meeting, described Zabul as one of the country's least-developed provinces and called for greater support in key sectors, including healthcare, agriculture, livestock, education, higher education, vocational training, water infrastructure, housing for returnees, and job creation.

Representatives of national and international organizations presented updates on their ongoing activities in various provinces and reaffirmed their commitment to implementing future projects based on the development priorities and needs of Zabul, Uruzgan, and other parts of the country.

The meeting concluded with participants emphasizing closer coordination to ensure development programs are implemented more effectively and contribute to sustainable economic growth, improved livelihoods, and expanded employment opportunities across Afghanistan. **The Kabul Times**

Islamic Emirate, European Countries Reach Understanding on Diplomatic Appointments, Reports

KABUL: The Islamic Emirate and several European countries have reached an understanding on accepting Islamic Emirate diplomats, according to reliable sources cited by TOLOnews on Wednesday.

The agreement will allow six Islamic Emirate diplomats to travel to several European countries in the near future to begin their diplomatic assignments, the TOLOnews said.

The reported development follows a recent visit by a delegation from Afghanistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Brussels, where officials held discussions with representatives of several European countries on diplomatic and bilateral issues.

If implemented, the agreement would mark a new step in diplomatic engagement between the Islamic Emirate and a number of European states. **The Kabul Times**

Security Commission Reviews National Security, Issues Directives

KABUL: The meeting of the Security and Clearance Commission was held with National Defense Minister Mawlavi Mohammad Yaqoob Mujahid, on the chair, reviewing the country's overall security situation and discussing measures aimed at further strengthening nationwide security.

The commission said in a statement on Wednesday that the participants conducted a comprehensive assessment of the security situation across the country and exchanged views on improving security arrangements and ensuring continued stability.

The commission's leadership emphasized the importance of providing reliable and comprehensive security for citizens across Afghanistan and issued recommendations to provincial commissions to improve coordination and reinforce security-related activities. Officials said the directives are intended to enhance cooperation among provincial bodies and further strengthen the country's security framework. **The Kabul Times**

Kazakhstan to Import Mineral Raw Materials from Afghanistan

ASTANA: Kazakhstan will import mineral raw materials from Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan under newly signed agreements aimed at supporting the country's metallurgical industry, Kazakhstan's Minister of Industry and Construction said in a statement the other day.

The country requires increased supplies of minerals such as copper, zinc, and gold to meet the growing needs of its metal-processing and manufacturing industries, the statement said.

The development reflects Afghanistan's expanding role as a regional supplier of mineral resources.

In recent years, the country has increased mining activities and has gradually turned mineral raw materials into one of its key export commodities. **The Kabul Times**

Kabul, Tehran Hold Talks on Standards, Trade Cooperation

KABUL: Mullah Abdullah Bashir, Director General of the National Standards and Quality Authority, met with Alireza Bigdeli, Iran's Ambassador to Kabul, to discuss strengthening cooperation in standardization and improving trade between the two neighboring countries.

Bashir emphasized the importance of applying recognized standards to exports and imports, saying that compliance with quality standards plays a

See P4

India Says Air Corridor Ensures Uninterrupted Trade with Afghanistan

DELHI: India's Ministry of External Affairs said in a statement the other day that trade between Kabul and New Delhi continues without interruption through the Afghanistan-India air corridor, ensuring the steady movement of goods despite regional logistical challenges.

Speaking at a press briefing the other day, Foreign Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal said Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock Mawlavi Ataullah Omari met several Indian ministers during his nearly week-long visit to India.

Jaiswal added that Omari also held a series of meetings with the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) as well as national and international organizations involved in agriculture to discuss expanding bilateral cooperation and strengthening agricultural and commercial ties between the two countries. **The Kabul Times**

Noor Jalal, Veronica Mawiya Discuss Health Cooperation

KABUL: The country's Minister of Public Health Mawlavi Noor Jalal Jalali, in a meeting with Veronica Mawiya, Gavi's Country Manager for Afghanistan, alongside representatives of the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF, discussed expanding primary healthcare services, strengthening routine immunization, and enhancing cooperation in Afghanistan's health sector.

Speaking at the meeting, Jalali outlined the ministry's priorities, and emphasized the expansion and support of primary healthcare services, the further development of routine vaccination programs, and closer cooperation with Gavi, according to a statement from the ministry on Wednesday.

He said combating measles, polio, and other communicable diseases remains among the ministry's top priorities, adding that preventive healthcare efforts are being strengthened alongside the continued expansion of basic health services throughout the country.

The minister also referred to Afghanistan's National Vaccination Strategy and National Health Strategy, stating that both documents are in the final stages of preparation and will soon be shared with all development partners to facilitate coordinated implementation.

Representatives of Gavi, WHO, and UNICEF shared their views on the issues discussed and reaffirmed their commitment to supporting Afghanistan's health sector. They stressed that Afghanistan remains one of Gavi's priority countries and pledged to continue long-term cooperation in immunization and other essential healthcare services. **The Kabul Times**

International-Daily
WWW.TheKabulTimes.com
Uzair Baryalay, Director of Govt. Dailies
Email: Atvaishan@gmail.com
Editor-in-Chief, Nik Mohammad Nikmal
Email: Nikmal@TheKabulTimes.com
Mob: (+93)700 208 103
Deputy Editor-in-Chief, Fathulbari Akhgar
Mob: (+93)748 076 223
Distribution: 0202 312 509-(+93)766 044 966)
Graphic designers: Baktash, Habibullah Aiman
Translators: Abdul Baqi Haqyar, Noor Ahmad and Hamid Jhwok
Cartoonist: Sayed Hassan Samedi
Address: 8th PD, Olympic Square, East of Chaman-e-Huzori, Kabul, Afghanistan

Food for thought

Today's Generation Guarantees Our Bright Future

Media Responsibility in Upholding Islamic and National Values

In Afghanistan's current environment, marked by regional sensitivities, rapid information flow, and evolving national priorities, the role of the media cannot be treated as a secondary concern. It is a central pillar of social stability. The recent discussions in Maidan Wardak highlighted a truth that must guide Afghan journalism today: the media's responsibility is not merely to report events, but to protect the moral, and national fabric of society.Islam grants space for expression, but it also sets its ethical boundaries. Speech that abandons truth, fuels suspicion, or spreads unfounded accusations does not fall under the umbrella of legitimate expression; it becomes a source of harm. And harm, in the information sphere, is no less dangerous than harm on the battlefield. When rumor replaces fact, society loses clarity. When sensationalism replaces justice, institutions lose trust. The Afghan media must therefore recognize that its first duty is moral discipline, anchoring every message in truth, fairness, and the intention to reform.This responsibility becomes even more urgent in matters touching national security. Afghanistan operates in a region where misinterpretation can escalate tensions, and where hostile narratives can exploit even minor inaccuracies. In such a context, irresponsible reporting is not a small mistake; it is a national vulnerability. Journalism must act as a stabilizing force, ensuring that information calms rather than inflames, clarifies rather than confuses, and strengthens rather than weakens the country's position.Yet the media's mission is not limited to preventing harm. It carries a constructive role as well. Societies advance through knowledge, reflection, and correction. The pen has always been a tool of reform in Islamic civilization. When journalists expose harmful customs, correct misunderstandings, and promote values rooted in faith and national unity, they contribute directly to the country's development. Their work becomes part of the nation's moral infrastructure.Afghanistan's media community is large, active, and influential. But influence, without responsibility, is dangerous. The country needs a media culture grounded in Islamic ethics, national loyalty, and professional rigor. The path forward requires rejecting rumor, resisting haste, and embracing truth as a sacred trust. In this moment of heightened geopolitical sensitivity, the Afghan media must stand as a guardian of clarity. Upholding Islamic values, protecting national interests, and committing to factual reporting are not optional; they are essential for the country's stability and future. Journalism, when practiced with integrity, becomes not just a profession, but a service to the nation.

How the Kabul–Delhi Corridor Outruns Regional Roadblocks

By: Ghulam Reza Omidi

India's recent confirmation that the Kabul–Delhi air corridor is fully operational is a major development for regional trade. When Randhir Jaiswal, the spokesperson for the Indian Ministry of External Affairs, shared this update, it sent a clear signal that both nations are determined to keep commercial channels open despite regional challenges and changing circumstances. This announcement did not happen in a vacuum; it closely followed a visit to New Delhi by Afghanistan's Minister of Agriculture, Ataullah Omari. During his trip, Omari met with key Indian officials, including ministers overseeing agriculture and food processing. These meetings, combined with the subsequent reassurance about the air corridor, show a mutual desire to prioritize practical, day-to-day economic cooperation over political gridlock.

To understand why this air link matters so much, you have to look at the geography. Afghanistan is landlocked, and for decades, its exporters have struggled to get their goods to international markets. Overland routes have at times faced delays due to management issues, political developments, and logistical challenges. The air corridor, launched back in 2017, was designed specifically to bypass these overland bottlenecks. By taking to the skies, Afghan traders gained direct access to Indian buyers, creating a reliable alternative that keeps business moving even when ground crossings are completely shut down.

Agriculture is the lifeblood of Afghanistan, supporting millions of families and driving the local economy. This is why Minister Omari's meetings in New Delhi were so significant. The conversations went beyond simple buying and selling to focus heavily on improving food processing and agricultural collaboration. Right now, Afghanistan exports a lot of raw commodities. If India can help Afghan producers process and package these goods locally, it changes the entire economic equation. Local processing keeps more of the profits in Afghanistan, creates jobs, and boosts farmers' incomes. It turns a simple trade relationship into a developmental partnership.

The air corridor is particularly crucial because of the specific goods Afghanistan exports. The country is famous for high-value, highly perishable products like fresh pomegranates, grapes, dried fruits, pine nuts, saffron, and traditional medicinal herbs. These are not goods that can sit in a hot truck at a border crossing for weeks. If they do not get to market quickly, they spoil, and the farmers lose everything. Direct flights ensure these premium goods arrive in Indian markets in peak condition, allowing Afghan merchants to command top prices and significantly cut down on waste.

This ongoing trade relationship reflects a broader, highly pragmatic approach by New Delhi. While diplomatic relations between India and Afghanistan continue to develop, both sides have maintained practical engagement through trade, humanitarian cooperation, and economic initiatives. Another is India's continued backing of Iran's Chabahar Port, which serves as another vital maritime gateway for landlocked Afghanistan. By keeping multiple transit options alive, India helps Afghanistan diversify its trade routes, reducing its reliance on any single, traditional trade routes.

Of course, maintaining an aerial trade bridge has its share of challenges. Air cargo is inherently much more expensive than road or rail transport, and high shipping rates can quickly eat into a trader's profits. For this partnership to be sustainable in the long run, both sides will need to tackle these logistics challenges head-on. This means finding ways to lower freight costs, building better cold-storage facilities at airports, and continuing to invest in Afghanistan's domestic processing industries. If they can make the logistics more efficient, the higher value of the processed goods will easily justify the cost of the flights.

See P4

Wakhan Corridor Placed Under Urgent Directive by Leader

By: Rahmat Shah Faraz

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has intensified its focus on one of the country's most strategically important infrastructure projects, importantly, the Wakhan Corridor road.

According to Badakhshan Governor Mohammad Ismail Ghaznawi, the leader of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has issued a special and urgent directive ordering all relevant institutions to accelerate construction and ensure the road is opened for public use as soon as possible. His remarks underscore the growing national significance of the corridor, which has long been viewed as a potential gateway for Afghanistan's integration into regional trade networks.

Governor Ghaznawi stressed that the Wakhan Corridor road is not an ordinary development initiative but a priority national project. He noted that some observers mistakenly believe construction has not yet begun, but the leadership's directive demonstrates that the project is moving forward with renewed urgency. "This is a major project," he said. "Some people believe work has not yet begun, but the leader of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has issued a special and urgent order for the swift completion of this road." His comments reflect the government's intention to counter public skepticism and reassure citizens that progress is underway.

The Wakhan Corridor, a narrow strip of land in northeastern Afghanistan, holds immense geopolitical and economic importance. Stretching toward China's Xinjiang region, it has historically served as a remote passageway linking Central Asia, South Asia, and East Asia. For decades, its rugged terrain and isolation prevented large-scale development. However, the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan now views the corridor as a potential economic lifeline, capable of connecting Afghanistan directly with China and, through China, with broader regional markets. Security considerations also play a central role in the project's advancement. The Chief of Army Staff of the Ministry of Defense, Fasihuddin Fitrat, stated that security forces are fully prepared to safeguard the route if a decision is made to open it. "If any plan for opening this route is implemented, our security forces are fully prepared to provide security, and we assure neighboring countries in this regard," he said. His assurance reflects the government's effort to demonstrate stability and reliability to regional partners, especially China, which has shown interest in expanding economic cooperation with Afghanistan.

Economic experts argue that the Wakhan Corridor could transform Afghanistan's trade landscape. Analyst Ghulam Haidar Atashpour described the corridor as more than a simple passageway. In his view, it is a multi-regional connector that could facilitate the movement of commercial goods not only between Afghanistan and China but also between Afghanistan and countries such as Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Türkiye, and even parts of Eastern Europe. "Wakhan is not only Afghanistan's gateway; it is also an important route connecting Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Iran, Türkiye, and even Eastern European countries," he said. His analysis highlights the corridor's potential to reduce transportation costs, shorten trade routes, and increase Afghanistan's competitiveness in regional markets.

The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development previously announced that construction is underway in two separate sections, reflecting the logistical complexity of building a road through mountainous terrain. Once completed, the project is expected to create new opportunities for trade, transit, and regional economic cooperation. The ministry has emphasized that the corridor will provide Afghanistan with a direct land link to China, a development that could reshape the country's economic orientation and strengthen its role in regional supply chains.

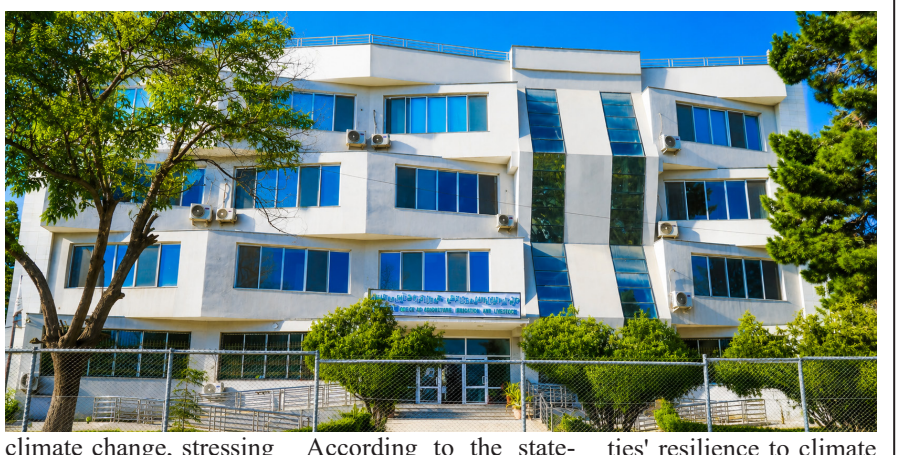
Beyond economics, the project carries symbolic significance. For the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, completing the Wakhan Corridor road demonstrates governance capacity, national vision, and commitment to development. It signals that despite political challenges and international scrutiny, the government is prioritizing infrastructure that could benefit both local communities and the national economy.

Local residents in Badakhshan have expressed cautious optimism. While some worry about environmental impacts or the challenges of maintaining security in remote areas, many welcome the possibility of improved transportation, increased trade, and greater access to markets. The corridor could also stimulate tourism, as Wakhan is known for its unique landscapes, cultural heritage, and historical significance along ancient Silk Road routes.

In summary, the Wakhan Corridor road project has emerged as a strategic priority for the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. With high-level directives, security assurances, and economic expectations aligned, the government is positioning the corridor as a transformative national undertaking. If completed successfully, it could open a new chapter in Afghanistan's regional connectivity, economic development, and diplomatic engagement.

Omari Says Coordinated Climate Projects Key to Addressing Water Scarcity

KABUL: The country's Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock Mawlavi Ataullah Omari, has emphasized that coordinated climate adaptation projects are essential to addressing Afghanistan's growing water scarcity, calling for closer cooperation between government institutions and international partners to ensure effective implementation.



Omari made the remarks during a meeting with the head of the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) in Afghanistan, where the two sides discussed climate adaptation initiatives, sustainable water resource management, and future cooperation, the ministry said in a statement on Wednesday.

The minister highlighted the Islamic Emirate's ongoing efforts to improve water management and mitigate the impacts of climate change, stressing that climate adaptation projects should be implemented in accordance with national priorities and the country's development needs.

He also underscored the importance of close coordination and internationally recognized implementation standards to ensure projects effectively reduce water shortages and strengthen resilience against climate-related challenges.

According to the statement, UNOPS representatives outlined the organization's plans to support climate adaptation and water management in Afghanistan, announcing that an initial 20 pilot check dams will be constructed in Kabul Province.

They said the projects will be carried out in close cooperation with the Ministry of Agriculture to improve water conservation and strengthen communities' resilience to climate change.

The meeting concluded with an agreement to establish a joint technical team comprising experts from the Ministry of Agriculture and UNOPS to oversee the projects from the survey stage through implementation, reflecting both sides' commitment to expanding practical cooperation in water resource management and climate resilience.

The Kabul Times

New Era of Tax Relief: Strengthening Afghanistan's Economy Through Business-Friendly Reform

By: Azar Rasikh

A government's success should never be measured solely by the amount of revenue it collects. More importantly, it should be judged by its ability to improve the lives of its citizens, create opportunities for businesses, encourage investment, and build an economic environment where prosperity can flourish. Taxation is an essential pillar of every state's finances, but when tax policies are balanced, fair, and responsive to economic realities, they become a powerful tool for growth rather than merely a source of public revenue. Governments that understand the financial challenges faced by their citizens and businesses earn greater public confidence while laying the foundation for long-term economic development.

Against this backdrop, the recent decision by the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan to introduce tax reductions represents a noteworthy step toward supporting economic activity and easing financial pressures on businesses and ordinary citizens. According to the announced policy, a 10 percent reduction will be applied to income taxes on both legal entities and individuals, taxes related to property transfers, and taxes imposed on petroleum products. In addition, individuals earning up to 120,000 Afghanis annually will remain exempt from income tax.

These measures have the potential to benefit thousands of taxpayers, entrepreneurs, traders, investors, and consumers. While taxation remains necessary for financing public services and government operations, reducing unnecessary burdens during periods of economic recovery can stimulate commercial activity, strengthen market confidence, and encourage greater participation in the formal economy.

Afghanistan's economy has experienced significant challenges over recent decades, including prolonged conflict, political uncertainty, declining investment, and disruptions to domestic and international trade. These circumstances have made it difficult for businesses to expand and for many families to maintain stable incomes. Under such conditions, policies that reduce operating costs and encourage economic activity can play an important role in rebuilding confidence and revitalizing markets.

Tax relief provides immediate financial breathing space for businesses. When traders, manufacturers, transport companies, importers, and service providers pay less in taxes, they retain more capital that can be reinvested in expanding operations, purchasing equipment, hiring employees, and improving productivity. Instead of allocating scarce resources solely to tax obligations, businesses gain greater flexibility to invest in growth and innovation.

One of the sectors likely to benefit directly from these reforms is the import and distribution of petroleum products. Fuel prices affect nearly every segment of the economy. Transportation costs, agricultural production, industrial manufacturing, and retail prices are all closely tied to the cost of fuel. Lower taxes on petroleum products may reduce operating expenses throughout supply chains, potentially contributing to lower prices for many essential goods and services.

Consumers stand to benefit as well. If businesses pass part of these savings on to customers through more competitive pricing, households may experience relief from the rising costs of daily necessities. Lower transportation expenses can reduce food prices, while cheaper fuel can decrease production costs for manufacturers and farmers alike. Such developments may improve purchasing power, particularly for low-and middle-income families whose budgets are most sensitive to price fluctuations.

Equally important is the exemption granted to individuals with annual incomes of up to 120,000 Afghanis. This measure recognizes the financial realities faced by many Afghan households and reduces the tax burden on lower-income earners. By allowing these families to retain more of their earnings, the policy may improve household consumption, support local markets, and enhance overall economic resilience.

The benefits extend beyond immediate financial relief. A predictable and business-friendly tax system can strengthen confidence within the private sector. Investors, whether domestic or international, seek stable environments where policies are transparent, consistent, and supportive of economic growth. Frequent uncertainty regarding taxation discourages investment, while fair and clearly communicated tax policies encourage entrepreneurs to establish new businesses and expand existing ones.

Afghanistan has already taken notable steps toward modernizing aspects of its tax administration in recent years. Greater use of digital systems, improved transparency, and efforts to simplify tax collection have contributed to a more organized process than in previous years. Continued modernization of tax administration can reduce bureaucratic delays, minimize opportunities for corruption, and make compliance easier for taxpayers. Such reforms not only improve efficiency but also strengthen public trust in state institutions.

However, tax reductions alone cannot fully unlock Afghanistan's economic potential. To maximize the benefits of these reforms, complementary measures should accompany them. Simplifying business registration procedures, accelerating customs processing, improving commercial infrastructure, strengthening banking services, expanding digital payment systems, and ensuring legal protections for investors would significantly enhance the impact of tax incentives. Together, these reforms would create a more competitive and attractive business environment.

The government also has an important responsibility to monitor the practical effects of tax relief. Authorities should encourage businesses and traders to pass a reasonable share of their reduced costs on to consumers through lower prices rather than allowing tax savings to be absorbed entirely as additional profits. Regular market monitoring, transparent communication, and constructive engagement with business associations can help ensure that ordinary citizens experience the intended benefits of these reforms.

Likewise, the private sector has a responsibility to respond positively. Traders and manufacturers who benefit from lower tax burdens should seize this opportunity to expand production, improve product quality, create employment opportunities, and strengthen domestic industries. A healthy relationship between government and business depends upon mutual trust and shared responsibility. Public policy can create opportunities, but sustainable economic growth ultimately requires productive investment by the private sector.

If these reforms are implemented effectively and supported by broader economic policies, the long-term outcomes could be significant. Increased business activity would likely generate more employment opportunities, allowing more Afghan families to secure stable incomes. Expanded investment could strengthen domestic manufacturing, reduce dependence on imported goods, and stimulate entrepreneurship across multiple sectors of the economy. Greater commercial activity would also broaden the tax base over time, enabling government revenues to grow naturally through economic expansion rather than through higher tax rates.

For traders, these reforms promise lower operating costs, greater investment confidence, improved competitiveness, and increased opportunities to expand into new markets. For ordinary citizens, they offer the prospect of lower prices, greater employment opportunities, improved purchasing power, and a more vibrant economy. For the government, successful implementation could strengthen public confidence, encourage voluntary tax compliance, attract new investment, and create a more sustainable foundation for national development.

Economic reform is rarely achieved through a single policy decision. Rather, it is built gradually through consistent, practical measures that encourage production, reward entrepreneurship, and reduce unnecessary obstacles to business. The recent tax relief measures represent an encouraging step in that direction. Continued dialogue between government institutions, business leaders, economists, and civil society will be essential to refining these policies and ensuring that they deliver their intended results.

See P4

THE KABUL TIMES DAILY

Saratan 25-1405 Thursday 16 July 2026 INo: 96-Vol: LXIV

The Kabul Times – the state-run newspaper–welcomes your advertisements. You can send your ADs to the daily to help you connect with your customers.

+93 700 330 184 Aryagulzar833@gmail.com

USD	GBP	INR	PKR	EUR	IRR	AED
01	01	1000	1000	01	1000	01
AFN 65.95	AFN 85.35	AFN 741	AFN 229	AFN 74.70	AFN 0.37	AFN 17.99

SPORTS

Amo Sharks Clinch Historic Hat-Trick with Dominant 7-Wicket Win Over Speenghar Tigers

The Amo Sharks have etched their name into the history books after defeating the Speenghar Tigers by seven wickets in the final to win the Shpageeza Cricket League (SCL XI) title. With the victory, the Sharks secured their third consecutive championship, completing a remarkable hat-trick and further establishing themselves as one of the tournament's most successful teams.

Chasing a competitive target in a high-pressure final, the Sharks remained calm and confident from the start. Imran Mir led the charge with a superb 77 off 45 balls, playing a composed yet aggressive innings that laid the foundation for the chase. Hassan Eisakhil then took control, smashing an unbeaten 63 from just 34 deliveries to steer his side to victory with plenty of balls to spare.

The pair's outstanding partnership proved too much for the Tigers, whose bowlers struggled to find any breakthrough. Their clinical batting display ensured the Sharks crossed the finish line comfortably, capping off another memorable campaign.

The triumph sparked celebrations among players and supporters alike, as the Amo Sharks completed an extraordinary run of three straight Shpageeza Cricket League titles, cementing their place as the dominant force in the competition.

The Kabul Times

South-West Futsal Tournament Kicks Off in Nimroz

The South-West Zone futsal tournament has officially kicked off in Zaranj, the capital of Nimroz province. Organized by the National Futsal Committee of the Football Federation in collaboration with the Nimroz Physical Education and Sports Directorate, the three-day event features teams representing Helmand, Kandahar, and the host province, Nimroz.

Action got underway immediately in the opening match of the tournament, where Helmand's Sabawoon team secured a hard-fought 4-2 victory over Kandahar to claim the first three points of the campaign.

The brief but intense tournament is designed with a clear development goal in mind: to determine the top futsal club in the South-West Zone and to scout the region's standout individual talents for future opportunities. With only three days of competitive play on the court in Zaranj, every match carries immense weight for the players looking to make a name for themselves on the regional stage.

The Kabul Times

Spain Blanks France 2-0 to Secure Spot in 2026 World Cup Final

Spain has marched into the 2026 FIFA World Cup final after a masterful 2-0 victory over France at AT&T Stadium in Arlington, Texas. The reigning European champions delivered a disciplined, commanding performance to shut down a star-studded French attack and secure their first World Cup final appearance since their historic 2010 triumph in South Africa.

The breakthrough came in the 22nd minute when teenage winger Lamine Yamal was brought down in the box. Mikel Oyarzabal stepped up and calmly converted the penalty to reward Spain's early dominance. Despite France entering the clash as heavy favorites with 16 tournament goals to their name, captain Kylian Mbappé and his teammates were completely stifled by a resolute Spanish defense that has conceded just once all tournament.

Spain doubled their lead early in the second half. Right-back Pedro Porro finished off a fluid, sweeping team move after linking up with Dani Olmo, leaving France with an insurmountable mountain to climb. The victory cements Spain's recent upper hand over Les Bleus, adding to their previous triumphs in the Euro 2024 semi-finals and the 2025 UEFA Nations League.

While France—the 2018 champions and 2022 runners-up—must now prepare for Saturday's third-place play-off, Spain is heading to New York New Jersey Stadium for Sunday's grand finale. They will face either Argentina or England, who face off in the second semi-final. This historic 48-team tournament, co-hosted by the US, Canada, and Mexico since June 11, is officially set for an epic conclusion on July 19.

The Kabul Times

Work Begins on Road Project in Mazar-e-Sharif

MAZAR-E-SHARIF: Construction work has begun on the Noor Khuda Road worth 27 million Afghanis, a key route connecting the Abad area of Wazir Panai Township with the central part of Mazar-e-Sharif, Balkh Municipality said in a statement on Wednesday. Residents welcomed the project, saying the poor condition of the road had caused serious transportation problems for years, particularly during winter when mud made travel difficult and in summer when dust affected daily life. They said the deteriorated road had hindered access to workplaces and essential services and that they had repeatedly requested its reconstruction. Officials from the Mazar-e-Sharif Municipality said the road project will be completed within five months through the municipality's development budget.

The road is 1,350 meters long and 14 meters wide, and includes asphalt paving, drainage systems, sidewalks, and other standard urban infrastructure aimed at improving transportation and easing the daily commute for residents, the statement said.

Once completed, the road is expected to significantly enhance connectivity and address long-standing concerns of the local community. **The Kabul Times**

Fourteen Water Supply Networks Constructed in Parwan, Ministry

KABUL: The country's Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development said in a statement on Wednesday that 14 water supply networks worth 47 million Afghanis have been constructed in Parwan Province.

The projects have been implemented in the districts of Siah Gerd (Ghorband), Koh Safi, Jabal al-Siraj, and Sheikh Ali, the statement said, adding that the networks now provide safe drinking water to 2,430 families, improving public health conditions and addressing one of the basic service needs of communities in the province.

Officials described the projects as part of the government's ongoing efforts to improve rural infrastructure and living conditions by expanding access to basic services across the country.

They added that similar development initiatives are continuing in other provinces to enhance the well-being of communities and support sustainable rural development.

The Kabul Times

Retaining Wall Project Completed in Paktia, Protecting Farmland from Floods

KABUL: A retaining wall project worth 8.35 million Afghanis has been constructed in Barkochi Khail village of Gardez, the capital of Paktia Province, the Ministry of Water and Energy said in a statement on Wednesday.

Funded through the development budget of the Ministry of Water and Energy, the project created employment opportunities for local residents during its four-month construction period, the statement said.

The 277-meter-long retaining wall is expected to protect around 120 jeribs of agricultural land and 150 families from seasonal flooding, helping safeguard farmland, homes, and local livelihoods while strengthening flood resilience in the area.

The Kabul Times

Kabul, Tehran Hold Talks...

From P1

vital role in facilitating trade, improving product quality, and strengthening economic relations, according to a statement from the authority on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Ambassador Bigdeli reaffirmed the readiness of Iran's National Standards Organization to cooperate with Afghanistan in standardization, technical capacity building, and the transfer of expertise.

Both sides agreed to expand technical cooperation and deepen bilateral trade through closer collaboration in standards and quality assurance.

The Kabul Times

How the Kabul–Delhi Corridor...

From P2

The Kabul–Delhi air corridor proves that practical economic cooperation can find a way through the most complex regional roadblocks. It is far more than just a flight path; it is a vital economic bridge that links rural Afghan communities directly to one of the world's most dynamic consumer markets. By focusing on shared interests like agriculture and food security, India and Afghanistan are keeping a vital connection alive, proving that business can thrive even in the face of profound regional uncertainty.

A New Era of Tax Relief: Strengthening...

From P3

Afghanistan possesses considerable economic potential.

Its strategic geographic location, entrepreneurial population, agricultural resources, mineral wealth, and expanding commercial links with regional markets provide a strong foundation for future growth.

By continuing to pursue balanced fiscal reforms, encouraging investment, supporting domestic production, and maintaining transparent economic governance, the country can strengthen its path toward greater self-reliance and sustainable development.

Ultimately, tax policy is not merely an instrument for collecting revenue; it is a reflection of a government's economic vision. Policies that ease financial burdens, encourage productive investment, and support businesses can generate benefits that extend far beyond the treasury.

When businesses prosper, workers find employment. When markets expand, consumers benefit from greater choice and more competitive prices.

When investment grows, government revenues increase through broader economic activity rather than heavier taxation.

This virtuous cycle is the foundation of every resilient economy, and with continued commitment to thoughtful reform, Afghanistan has an opportunity to move steadily toward a more prosperous and economically secure future.